

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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REPUBLICAN KATRINA RECOVERY PROPOSAL “OPERATION OFFSET” SHOULD BE CALLED “OPERATION OPPRESS THE POOR”

*Rep. Markey Criticizes New Compassionless Conservative Report on
Funding the Katrina Recovery Relief*

Washington, D.C. – Before President Bush could finish addressing the nation to offer his vision for the reconstruction of the devastation in the Gulf states, White House officials and House Republicans made it clear that government spending cuts, not the repeal of tax cuts for the wealthy would cover the costs of the Katrina recovery program. Today, the Republican Study Committee (RSC) published a report detailing exactly how they suggest the U.S. government should pay for the recovery efforts. The report entitled, “Operation Offset” would more apply be named “Operation Oppression: How the Poor should pay to rebuild the South.” Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), a senior Democrat on the House Energy and Commerce Committee renewed his call for the President to ask for the sacrifice of *all* Americans not just America’s working families.

“George Bush is willing to do whatever it takes to protect the richest Americans from having to pay for the aftermath of Katrina. President Bush has two tax cuts for his wealthy friends that have yet to even take effect and if eliminated could generate billions of dollars for hurricane recovery. In fact 97% of these tax cuts will go to households with incomes of more \$200,000 a year with more than half of those benefiting from the cuts making more than \$1 million a year,” said Rep. Markey.

“But Republicans don’t want to curb spending for the wealthiest people in America!! Instead, today Republicans are proposing that we cut programs that the poorest and most vulnerable Americans rely on: school lunches, housing subsidies, Even Start, safe and drug free schools programs, student loans and Medicaid,” Rep. Markey continued. “The Republicans are suggesting that we address the poverty exposed by Katrina by starving and scrimping on education, housing, health and food programs for families across America – this is morally reprehensible and an abdication of our responsibility. We cannot rebuild New Orleans on the backs of America’s poor, but that is precisely what President Bush is proposing to do.

“The Republicans do not want to trouble their base or even shave a penny from their generous tax breaks for millionaires. The message from the White House to America’s millionaires is crystal clear: we will take care of you- there is no need for you to make any sacrifices,” said Rep. Markey.

The cuts proposed by Rep. Mike Pence and the RSC include the following programming reductions (in millions of dollars over the next ten years):

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| • Reduce Medicaid Administrative spending: | 12,860 |
| • Eliminate Subsidized Loans to Graduate students: | 8,555 |
| • Eliminate the Even Start Program: | 1,238 |
| • Eliminate Funding for the National and Community Service: | 6,480 |
| • Eliminate School Lunches for Students: | 6,690 |
| • Reduce funding for Community Health Centers: | 1,392 |

For more information on how to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina check out Representative Markey’s website at <http://www.house.gov/markey/>

